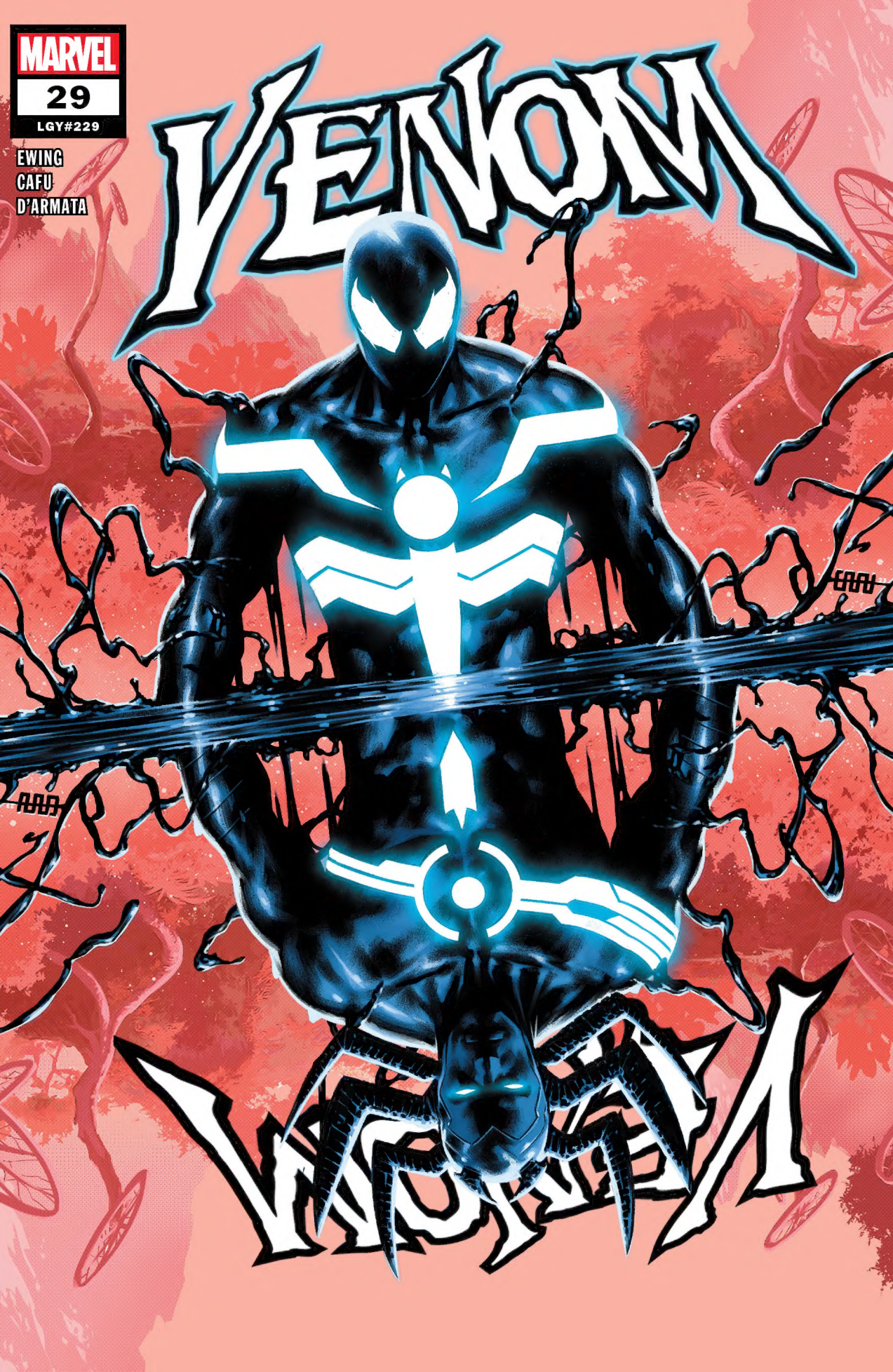
MARVEL
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VENOM

MARVEL SALUTES
Alison Gill
on her retirement from her legendary 40-year comic book career.
Thank you for contributing to the Marvel Universe and beyond,
one page at a time.

***YEARS AGO,*** EDDIE BROCK WAS A REPORTER WHOSE CAREER WAS RUINED, AND HE CONTEMPLATED ENDING HIS OWN LIFE. BUT HE FOUND A ***KINDRED SPIRIT***--AN EXTRATERRESTRIAL PARASITIC ALIEN CALLED A ***SYMBIOTE***. THE CREATURE BONDED TO HIM, AND THE TWO WERE JOINED. TOGETHER, THEY ARE:

# VENOM

## "PALINDROME"

UNTIL RECENTLY, **EDDIE BROCK** WAS THE SYMBIOTE-WEARING WEB-SLINGER KNOWN AS **VENOM** AND THE LEADER OF THE SYMBIOTE SPECIES--*THE KING IN BLACK*. BUT WHEN EDDIE SEEMINGLY DIED, HIS MIND BECAME UNSTUCK IN TIME. AT THE END OF ALL THINGS--THE GARDEN OF TIME--BROCK BECAME TRAPPED IN A TIME MAZE. EDDIE, AND EVERY FUTURE VERSION OF HIMSELF, WAS DESTINED TO BECOME THE VILLAINOUS **MERIDIUS**.

DESPERATE TO ESCAPE HIS CAGE, EDDIE SOUGHT A MEANS TO TIME TRAVEL WITH BOTH HIS MIND AND HIS BODY. AFTER SEVERAL MISADVENTURES ACROSS TIME AND SPACE, EDDIE LANDED ON **KANG THE CONQUEROR'S** DOORSTEP. IN EXCHANGE FOR A SAMPLE OF THE **BEDLAM** SYMBIOTE EDDIE'S BONDED TO, KANG GRANTED THEM USE OF HIS OWN TIME MACHINE.

AND EDDIE'S SET COURSE FOR THE GARDEN OF TIME--AND MERIDIUS!


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LOOK AT THOSE CAVEMEN GO...
WHO AM I?
I WAS VENOM, ONCE. I'M THE KING IN BLACK.
I'M EDDIE BROCK. THE ONE ON THE LEFT.
I USED TO BE THE EDDIE BROCK ON THE RIGHT, WILDE...BUT I WANT TO BE THE EDDIE BROCK IN THE MIDDLE--MERIDIUS. I'M STUDYING HIM. LEARNING FROM HIM. TRYING TO BECOME HIM.
THAT'S WHY THEY CALL ME TYRO.

I JUST WATCHED A FIGHT BETWEEN MYSELF, MYSELF AND MYSELF. THAT'S WHAT HAPPENS IN THE GARDEN OF TIME--THERE ARE SIX EDDIE BROCKS HERE, AND WE DON'T LIKE EACH OTHER.
BUT AS I WATCHED, A MEMORY CAME BACK TO ME--ONE THAT WAS STOLEN LONG AGO, BEFORE EVEN WILDE...BACK WHEN I BECAME BEDLAM.
MERIDIUS... BEFORE YOU, UH, LEAVE...THERE'S SOMETHING I MEANT TO SAY TO YOU.
SOMETHING I FORGOT...
A MEMORY OF A DEMON'S LAUGH.
TIME IS WARPED IN LIMBO!
AND IT CAN TAKE MORE THAN ONE TRACK...
THERE ARE SIX OF US IN THE GARDEN. BUT WHAT IF?
WHAT IF THERE'S A SEVENTH EDDIE?
I HAVE TO WARN MERIDIUS-- BEFORE--
DO YOU KNOW WHAT I FORGOT, TYRO? HOW PATHETIC YOU ARE.
STOP CRAWLING AFTER ME AND DO AS YOU'RE TOLD, YOU RIDICULOUS CHILD.
I HAVE PLACES TO BE.
WOW.
NICE GUY.
YEAH.

WELL...NOBODY CAN SAY I DIDN'T TRY.
NOBODY CAN SAY I HAVEN'T TRIED--FOR SO, SO LONG--TO LEARN THE SECRETS MERIDIUS KNOWS.
BUT I'M NO NEARER TO IT THAN WHEN I WAS WILDE. EVEN WHEN I WAS BLUE WITH NO EYES, I COULD SEE THE BIGGER PICTURE--AT LEAST ENOUGH TO JOKE ABOUT IT.

IS THAT MY FAULT THOUGH? THE PROBLEM ISN'T THAT I CAN'T LEARN--IT'S THAT MERIDIUS WON'T TEACH.
HE'S TOO CLOSE TO IT. TOO CLOSE TO ME--AND I'VE ALWAYS BEEN MY OWN WORST ENEMY.
NO. I CAN'T WAIT AND HOPE FOR SOME FUTURE ME TO PASS ON WHAT I NEED OUT OF KINDNESS OR PITY. NOBODY ELSE IS GOING TO TEACH ME HOW TO CONTROL MY DESTINY.
I HAVE TO FIND THE KNOWLEDGE FOR MYSELF.

I HAVE TO THROW MYSELF IN AT THE DEEP END.

DID **MERIDIUS** DO THIS, WHEN HE WAS ME? IS **THIS** THE PATH HE TOOK? IT **MUST** BE...AND YET...

I'M AT THE HEART OF THE GARDEN--THE **SYMBIOTE HIVE**--AND IT'S A SEA OF **DEATH.** I'M SEEING VISIONS OF THE **DEAD SYMBIOTE MINDS** ALL AROUND ME... ASTRAL **SKELETONS,** CONSUMED **HUSKS...**

BUT THERE'S **SOMETHING** STILL ALIVE HERE.

SOMETHING **FAMILIAR.**

THE **SEVENTH EDDIE.**

IT CALLS ITSELF **THE EVENTUALITY**--AND SOMEHOW, IT **TOO** IS EDDIE BROCK...BUT IN A SHAPE I'VE NEVER SEEN.

**"NOT ON THIS TRACK YOU HAVEN'T,"** IT SAYS--AND LAUGHS.

AND IN THAT MOMENT, I FEEL A **CROWD** AROUND ME--A CROWD OF **OTHER SELVES,** OF **POSSIBILITIES.**

ALL THE APPROACHES I **COULD** HAVE TAKEN TO THIS MOMENT OF **ENLIGHTENMENT...**

...ALL THE ROADS THAT **LEAD** HERE.

BECAUSE **EVERY** ROAD LEADS HERE, THE EVENTUALITY TELLS ME. EVERY PATH THE KING IN BLACK CAN TAKE LEADS TO **THIS.**

**ETERNAL SERVITUDE,** MAINTAINING ETERNITY **ITSELF**--IN ETERNAL **DARKNESS.**

NO!
I DON'T WANT IT.
WHEN I PANIC, IT'S ALL TOO EASY TO UNMOOR MYSELF FROM THE PRESENT--AND FLEE DESPERATELY INTO THE ARMS OF TIME.
BUT NOW THAT I'M IN THE TIMESTREAM...WHERE CAN I GO? HOW CAN I OUTRUN MY OWN FATE?
WHEN I WAS EDDIE, I TRIED TO CHANGE THINGS...EVEN AFTER I WAS TOLD IT COULDN'T BE DONE.
WHO TOLD ME THAT? WHAT WAS HIS NAME...?
WITHOUT ACCESS TO THE PROPER TECHNIQUES--WHICH I WOULD NEVER TEACH AN AMATEUR--YOU CAN'T CHANGE WHAT'S BEEN ESTABLISHED.
KANG. THAT WAS IT.
KANG THE CONQUEROR.
SO IF I WANT TO FIND HIM AGAIN...
...I'D BETTER FIND A CONQUEST.

SOMEWHERE IN TIME, THERE'S AN INNOCENT PLANET WHERE SENTIENT LIFE HASN'T EVEN FORMED...
...BUT ONE DAY IT WILL.
LIZARDS WILL ONE DAY CRAWL FROM THESE ROCKS. OVER MILLENNIA, THEY'LL GROW OPPOSABLE THUMBS. USE TOOLS. CONQUER THE SKY AND THE STARS.
AND THEN...THEY'LL GET IN KANG'S WAY.
SOMEWHERE IN THE MOUNTAINS, UNDER THE INCREDIBLE BARRAGE OF WEAPONS FROM A BILLION YEARS HENCE--A LAST LIZARD EGG SHATTERS.
A SPECIES DIES BEFORE IT WAS EVER BORN.
PROBLEM SOLVED.
KANG?
I NEED YOUR HELP.
I--I'M TYRO-- I MEAN, EDDIE BROCK. KING IN BLACK, MASTER OF ALL SYMBIOTES... REMEMBER?
HAVE WE MET YET?
NO, EDWARD, WE HAVE NOT.
BUT WHAT A PROMISING FIRST MEETING THIS IS.

YOU'VE CAUGHT ME IN A GOOD MOOD. SO...YES, EDDIE, I WILL HELP YOU. AND THEN YOU CAN HELP ME.
WITH WHAT? I--I DON'T WANT TO--
DON'T WORRY. I WON'T ASK ANYTHING THAT YOU'RE NOT WILLING TO OFFER. I CAN BE A DEADLY ENEMY--BUT I CAN BE A POWERFUL FRIEND, AS WELL.
AND FRANKLY, YOU LOOK LIKE YOU COULD USE A FRIEND. YOU HAVE THE LOOK OF SOMEONE OF GREAT POWER WHO'S BEEN IGNORED AND BELITTLED FOR TOO LONG.
SO IF YOU LET ME, I'LL GIVE YOU TRUE POWER--THE POWER TO COMMAND RESPECT.
AND MORE.
BEHOLD--THE UNIVERSE IN A HARD-LIGHT HOLOGRAM. EACH DOT OF LIGHT IS A GALAXY, BY THE WAY.
GO AHEAD. FEEL THE QUALITY.
ALL THIS, MY FRIEND.
IF YOU PLAY MY GAME, ON MY BOARD, BY MY RULES...
...ALL THIS CAN BE YOURS.
...
WHAT DO I HAVE TO DO?

THE FIRST THING KANG TEACHES ME IS HOW TO FIND MY HUMAN FACE AGAIN. MERIDIUS NEVER WOULD HAVE BOTHERED. HE NEVER EVEN CONSIDERED IT.
WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME I SMILED?
KANG SAYS IT'S A VITAL STEP TO BUILD MY CONFIDENCE...
...AND WITH CONFIDENCE COMES CONTROL.
KANG'S TEACHING ME COMBAT AND STRATEGY. TELLING ME HOW TO CENTER MYSELF. HOW TO FIGHT. HOW TO PLAN. HOW TO THINK.
HE REALLY IS THE BEST FRIEND I EVER HAD.
IN RETURN, AS PROMISED, I HELP HIM. AS KING IN BLACK, I CAN CONDITION AND PROGRAM NEXT-GENERATION WAR SYMBIOTES.
WE DELIVER THEM TO A LATER KANG AT AN EARLIER TIME POINT. HE'LL PASS THEM ON TO HIS PAST SELF AFTER...FIELD-TESTING.
KANG LEADS A COMPLICATED LIFE...
...BUT MINE IS SIMPLER. FOR ALL THEIR COMPLEXITY, MY CRISSCROSSING ROADS THROUGH TIME START OUT FROM ONE PLACE.
A PLACE NAMED DYLAN.

I HAVEN'T THOUGHT ABOUT MY SON IN A *LONG TIME*. IT WAS *BETTER* THAT WAY--I'M NOTHING BUT A *DANGER* TO HIM NOW. LAST TIME I TRIED TO INTERFERE IN HIS LIFE, HE ALMOST *DIED*.

BUT WITH WHAT KANG'S *TAUGHT* ME, I CAN SEND MY MIND THROUGH TIME *WITHOUT* POSSESSING SYMBIOTE MATTER AT THE *DESTINATION*. I CAN CATCH A *GLIMPSE* OF HIM--AND *VENOM*.

JUST A PEEK. JUST TO CHECK THAT HE'S SAFE.

SO I SEND MY MIND OUT

AND I *SEE*...

...THE *END OF THE STORY*.

VENOM'S *ULTIMATE FORM*.

*VENOMWORLD*.

HOW LONG?

HOW LONG DO I JUST *STAND* HERE? *WATCHING* IT?

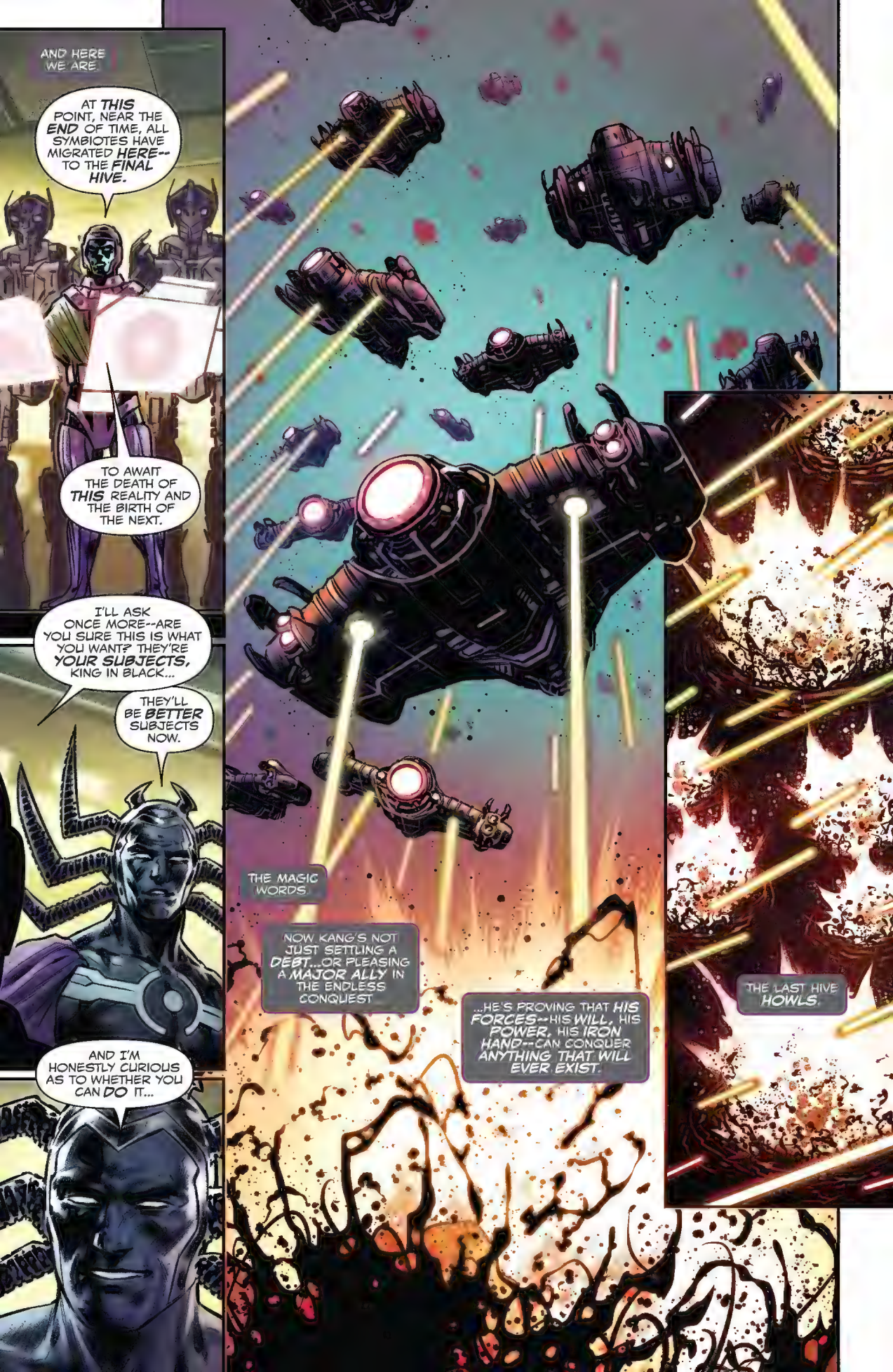
I DON'T KNOW.

BUT WHEN I *COME* BACK TO MYSELF...

...I'M NOT THE SAME

IT'S A VAST IMPROVEMENT.
I'M THINKING MORE CLEARLY THAN EVER--AND, WITH MY NEW MINDSET, I KNOW EXACTLY WHAT I HAVE TO DO TO BREAK THAT DOOMED FUTURE.
BOTH THE EARTH'S... AND MINE.
BROCK'S SON. HE'S THE KEY...THE CODEX, IF YOU WILL.
HMM. DID I SAY BROCK'S SON?
SO IT GOES. IT'S USELESS PRETENDING I HAVE ANYTHING IN COMMON WITH THAT CATERPILLAR OF A MAN...
...OR THAT I FEEL ANYTHING FOR HIS BRAT.
I HAVE MY OWN CHILDREN TO ORDER AROUND. HAVEN'T I TAUGHT THESE SOLDIER BOYS EVERYTHING THEY KNOW?
AND JUST LIKE BROCK, I'LL THROW THEM ON THE FIRE TO GET WHAT I WANT.
NO PROGENY IS SACRED TO ME.

NO FRIENDSHIP EITHER.
I CAN BE A POWERFUL FRIEND, KANG. BUT... I CAN BE A VERY DEADLY ENEMY, AS WELL.
HOW MANY OF YOUR CONQUESTS IN THIS ERA DEPEND ON SYMBIOTE TECHNOLOGY?
YOU CAN WEED IT OUT OF YOUR SYSTEMS... AND YOU WILL...BUT HERE AND NOW, ALL YOUR GAINS DEPEND ON IT.
AS KING IN BLACK, I CAN NEGATE THOSE GAINS. TURN YOUR SOLDIERS AGAINST YOU--OR TURN THEM OFF.
IT'D MAKE A BIG HOLE IN YOUR PLANS...
...SO YOU'D BETTER ASK WHAT YOU CAN HELP ME WITH.
NOTHING YOU WON'T WANT TO OFFER, OF COURSE.
VERY NICELY DONE, EDWARD. YOU'LL MAKE A CONQUEROR YET.
TELL ME WHAT YOU NEED.
SO I DO.


AND HERE WE ARE.
AT THIS POINT, NEAR THE END OF TIME, ALL SYMBIOTES HAVE MIGRATED HERE--TO THE FINAL HIVE.
TO AWAIT THE DEATH OF THIS REALITY AND THE BIRTH OF THE NEXT.
I'LL ASK ONCE MORE--ARE YOU SURE THIS IS WHAT YOU WANT? THEY'RE YOUR SUBJECTS, KING IN BLACK...
THEY'LL BE BETTER SUBJECTS NOW.
AND I'M HONESTLY CURIOUS AS TO WHETHER YOU CAN DO IT...
THE MAGIC WORDS.
NOW KANG'S NOT JUST SETTLING A DEBT...OR PLEASING A MAJOR ALLY IN THE ENDLESS CONQUEST
...HE'S PROVING THAT HIS FORCES--HIS WILL, HIS POWER, HIS IRON HAND--CAN CONQUER ANYTHING THAT WILL EVER EXIST.
THE LAST HIVE HOWLS.

BUT EVEN TIME'S CONQUEROR CAN ONLY DO SO MUCH.
I'M AFRAID RAW GOO IS HARDER TO EXTINGUISH THAN I THOUGHT. AGGRAVATING...
READY FOR YOUR TURN AT BAT?
WATCH AND LEARN, OLD FRIEND.
THE HIVE CAN'T BE KILLED--AT LEAST, NOT FROM THE OUTSIDE.

BUT KANG'S ATTACK LEFT IT SHAKEN--AND VULNERABLE.
ENOUGH FOR ME TO LET MY MIND OUT--DIVE DEEP, PIERCE THE HIVE'S SKIN LIKE A POISON ARROW--

--AND MURDER EVERY SOUL WITHIN.

SUCH PEACE, INSIDE. SUCH POETRY.

THE SYMBIOTES SPENT MILLENNIA EVOLVING INTO AN UTTERLY HARMONIZED COMMUNITY--A BEAUTIFUL CHOIR, EXISTING IN PERFECT SYMBIOSIS WITH ITSELF--

--SERENADING THE COSMOS TO ITS END.

BORING.

YOU'VE DISPLEASED YOUR KING, SYMBIOTES.

I'M SICK OF YOUR SONG--

I SPENT DECADES--CENTURIES--WORKING WITH KANG TO MASTER MY KING IN BLACK POWER. I AM TRULY A GOD NOW--AND MY CONGREGATION IS MINE TO DESTROY.

I ONLY NEED THEIR SUBSTANCE FOR MY PLANS--NOT THEIR SENTIENCE.

--SO LET ME HEAR YOUR SCREAM!

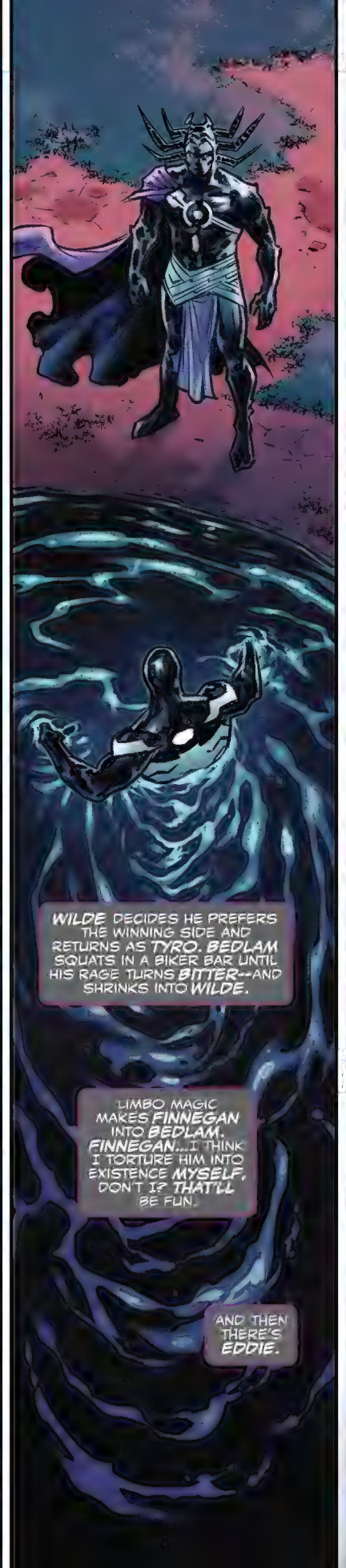
I WON'T LIE--IT FEELS GOOD. WHEN DID I EVER FEEL THIS MUCH CONTROL OVER MY LIFE?

WHEN DID I EVER FEEL THIS JOY?

AND NOW--IN DEAD SYMBIOTE FLESH--I CAN BUILD.

BUILD A TRAP. BUILD A GARDEN. A NICE, BRIGHT, COLORFUL PARADISE.

AND JUST WHEN I'VE GOT IT HOW I WANT IT...MY GUESTS ARRIVE.
THE KINGS IN BLACK, COMING ONE BY ONE TO THE ONLY HOME I'VE ALLOWED THEM.


WILDE DECIDES HE PREFERS THE WINNING SIDE AND RETURNS AS TYRO. BEDLAM SQUATS IN A BIKER BAR UNTIL HIS RAGE TURNS BITTER--AND SHRINKS INTO WILDE.
LIMBO MAGIC MAKES FINNEGAN INTO BEDLAM. FINNEGAN...I THINK I TORTURE HIM INTO EXISTENCE MYSELF, DON'T I? THAT'LL BE FUN.
AND THEN THERE'S EDDIE.

EDDIE, WHO STARTED THIS
EDDIE, WHO I HATE MOST OF ALL.

HE TRAPPED US ALL--MAROONED US HELPLESSLY IN OUR DESTINIES.
HE CAGED US...

...AND ONLY I HAVE THE KEY.

THE HARD WORK IS ALREADY DONE. IF ANY MORE PREPARATIONS ARE NEEDED, I CAN GO BACK IN TIME AND PREPARE THEM.
NOTHING CAN GO WRONG. NOTHING DID.
THIS IS EDDIE. AS YOU GUESSED, WILDE, HE'S A KING AS WELL--WHO OBVIOUSLY CAME HERE THE SAME WAY YOU DID--
HE MEANS BY UNSHACKLING YOUR MIND FROM THE FLOW OF TIME--
DON'T.
EVER.
SPEAK FOR ME.
MY OWN ANGER SURPRISES ME. I THOUGHT I'D FEEL SOME SYMPATHY TOWARD TYRO--TOWARD MYSELF.
BUT IT'S NOT MYSELF, IS IT? IT'S A SNIVELING, PATHETIC WRETCH--A SHABBY COAT I HAVE FAR OUTGROWN. IT DISGUSTS ME.
I--I'M SORRY, MERIDIUS. I DIDN'T MEAN TO DISRESPECT YOU.
YOU KNOW I ONLY WANT TO LEARN FROM YOU...
STILL...THERE'S SOMETHING HE WANTED TO TELL ME, ISN'T THERE? SOMETHING HE WILL WANT TO TELL ME.
ABOUT TRACKS...ABOUT BROCK...
NO. IT'S GONE.
NEVER MIND. IT CAN'T HAVE BEEN IMPORTANT.
I'M THE KING IN BLACK, AFTER ALL. THE VERY PATTERN OF DESTINY ITSELF SERVES ME...

...AND WHO AM I TO SAY IT'S WRONG?
ROSEBUD II
TO BE CONTINUED...

# Eddie's Clubhouse

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**MAKE MINE MERIDIUS!**

Hello, Venomaniacs, and welcome to another installment of EDDIE'S CLUBHOUSE! Your premier destination for any and all things symbiotic in the Marvel Universe!

**WHAT A MONTH IT'S BEEN!** Where do we even begin? Well, how about right here?! In the beating heart of all things Marvel--the comics!

After the whirlwind adventure from Torunn Grønbekk and Julius Ohta that made BLACK WIDOW the latest and greatest host to a symbiote in the Marvel U (more on that in a mo!), Al Ewing and CAFU have returned to the series to shed light on one of the greatest mysteries of this entire run: THE ORIGIN OF MERIDIUS!

At last, you have the answer--but as with any great Marvel tale, with a single answer come many, many more questions. What does the Eventuality want?! How does Eddie (or Meridius?!) ascend and transform into a singular, giant hand floating in space?! And what the heck was up with that **VENOM PLANET** we just saw???

***ALL THOSE ANSWERS AND MORE ARE WAITING FOR YOU IN THE NEXT YEAR OF VENOM!***

As a matter of fact, just a couple of weeks ago, both Al and Torunn were in the city for New York Comic Con and were able to share their plans for their continuing Venom and Carnage sagas--and as a Venomaniac first and foremost, I'll tell you that you symbiote readers are going to be eating well for MONTHS! What's coming is one of the most ambitious and exciting plans for the symbiote corner of the Marvel U I think I've ever heard. SO PREPARE YOURSELVES!

SPEAKING OF CARNAGE! As I write this, we are under two weeks away from the release of Torunn and Pere Pérez's CARNAGE #1! Torunn and Pere, with editors Ellie Pyle and MR Daniel, have poured so much into this series, and if it's not on your pull list, you better move quick and ask your local comic-book shop to hold a copy for you, because it starts with a BANG and never slows down!

The series will reunite the Carnage symbiote with Cletus Kasady--but this is a Cletus unlike any you've ever seen before, and the means by which he and the symbiote will be reunited is one that the symbiote books have been orbiting for YEARS now. It's grisly and icky but simultaneously undeniably "super hero." You're going to LOVE it--I know I sure do!

***CARNAGE #1***

IN FACT! I and everyone else here at Marvel HQ are so excited by what Torunn and Pere are cooking up that we wanted a slice of that action all for ourselves. (Well, Venom's selves, but you know what I mean.)

Which is why I'm SO EXCITED to tease that after VENOM #29 and #30, Torunn will be returning to VENOM to spearhead a crossover between VENOM and CARNAGE!

BUT FEAR NOT! We're taking a slightly more streamlined approach to this one--no ALPHAs, no OMEGAs. Just four issues of VENOM and CARNAGE goodness, across VENOM #31, CARNAGE #5, VENOM #32 and CARNAGE #6!

But Torunn's not going to be doing it alone. For literal years now, the Venom faithful have watched in anticipation as Eddie and Dylan Brock drifted further and further apart (literally and figuratively).

Here, we're finally going to start bringing those two stories together. So, while Torunn and Dylan are fighting for their very lives, Al and the colorful cast of characters we've seen in the Garden of Time will ALSO have a part to play. All with art from the one and only KEN LASHLEY!

I can't say much more beyond that for now, but watch this space, the CARNAGE letter column and Marvel.com for more info! And, as always, remind your comic shop to put it on your pull list, because it's going to rock everyone's socks off.

***VENOM #31***

***WHY SHOULD THE VENOM AND CARNAGE SERIES HAVE ALL THE SYMBIOTIC FUN THOUGH? THEY SHOULDN'T! NOT WHEN BLACK WIDOW IS ALSO BONDED TO A SYMBIOTE, THE LATEST OFFSPRING OF THE VENOM SYMBIOTE!***

While her infant symbiote's abilities remain largely a mystery, Natasha knows power when she sees it, and she's not one to give it up so easily.

That's why she's going to continue to wear the symbiote suit for the FORESEEABLE FUTURE! So, if you're a symbiote fan, DON'T MISS THUNDERBOLTS! Or the upcoming HAWKEYE/BLACK WIDOW anniversary series!

Nat's going to be rocking her symbiotic suit in both of those series, so don't miss them!

***THUNDERBOLTS #1***

***JUST ANNOUNCED! THE SUMMER OF SYMBIOTES MAY BE OVER, BUT THERE WERE SO MANY STONES LEFT UNTURNED, SO MANY POSSIBILITIES ACROSS THE MULTITUDINOUS MARVEL MULTIVERSE, THAT WE COULDN'T HELP BUT ASK OURSELVES... WHAT IF...?***

***WHAT IF...? VENOM #1***

From writer Jeremy Holt and some of Marvel's most talented rising-star illustrators comes WHAT IF...? VENOM--a five-issue miniseries that, in the great tradition of Marvel's WHAT IF...? series, reimagines a singular pivotal moment in a character's history and takes it in a totally different direction. And now VENOM is getting that very same treatment! We'll share more on this series in the coming months, but suffice it to say, I read *WHAT IF...? VENOM HAD POSSESSED THE PUNISHER* when I was 7 years old, and I'd be lying if I said that wasn't an informative work here.

All right! Enough plugging! We're almost out of space for this one anyway, so let's at least get a few letters out of the old mailbag, starting with one from a fan from all the way in Nigeria!

Hi,

I'm a HUGE fan of this Venom series. I'm from Nigeria, and I honestly can't wait to see what happens next. Personally, I really love the way Black Widow's symbiote looks like a bunch of spiders. Keep up the awesome work.

Onyinye

Thanks for reading and for writing, Onyinye! It is always such a joy to hear from international readers--all the more so when they like what we're doing!

Greetings, Symbiote Hive Mind!

I just got done reading the latest issue of VENOM, and I'll admit, I was initially skeptical about Torunn Grønbekk taking over Ram V's role as the co-writer of VENOM and having Natasha get her own symbiote.

But after reading what Torunn's done so far in VENOM #23, #26 and #27, I have to say I'm very impressed. I really dig the design of the Widow symbiote, and it has me intrigued to see what larger part it will play in both Nat's future and the greater symbiote mythology. It also has now made me retroactively excited for the upcoming Carnage series that she's doing later in November with Pere Pérez.

Now, that isn't to say I still haven't been digging what Al Ewing has been doing with Eddie. Far from it. That latest two-parter where Eddie, Bedlam and Doctor Doom go on a time-hopping adventure across the Marvel Universe was a ton of fun. Especially as we see Eddie using this to desperately attempt to break out of the time loop he's found himself in to save Dylan.

But one question that I have is: In issue #25, Doom makes mention of an oncoming "Venom War" in the near future--is this going to be a battle between Eddie and all his various alternate selves from time and space against Dylan and the army he's been building over the past 27 issues? Or is it going to be a fight between all the various versions of Eddie? Also, because Grønbekk is also working on the Carnage series as well as VENOM, is there a chance Cletus or Agent Anti-Venom are going to be making any kind of appearance in the Venom War?

Much love,
Owen S.
Winterville, NC

We love to turn skeptics into True Believers, Owen! I can't answer all your questions, but what I CAN say is that I think you're going to love the direction we're going in! Just hold on to your hat because it's going to be a bumpy and brutal ride!

Dear VENOM team,

I just read VENOM #27! Thanks for an awesome issue and story on the whole! I'm really excited to see what happens with Natasha/Widow now in the mix.

The many threads of this story (Dylan/Toxin/Alchemax/NoName/ etc., and then the Eddie/Meridius/ Bedlam/Kang insanity brewing beyond the veil of time) are so fun to try to follow. I can only imagine the insanely awesome storyboards and planning that must've been necessary to chart this story out! :D

Natasha's symbiote creeping along the floor and over her body like a swarm of spiders was such a cool visual. Absolutely perfect!

And the visual of Toxin being blasted to goo by the sonic/heat rifles was also absolutely incredible! Even just Toxin and Venom together in the Hive, meeting Widow: such fantastic color and perspective looking up at the two towering symbiotes. I hope Ohta & D'Armata stay on this title for a long time to come! :D

Now with Bren taken by NoName, I'm so curious to see where all this is going to end! It's crazy to think how this is really just two kids running around without any adults helping them out--scary in its own way, regardless of how powerful they are. Hopefully Natasha's able to save the boys from their errors!

I'm looking forward to seeing how this all collides with what the elder Brock is dealing with and if/when all the disparate threads weave back together.

Andrew S.
Alexandria, Virginia

Thanks for your letter, Andrew! WIDOW is one of the coolest symbiotes in the Marvel U, I think, and I can't wait to see what adventures she gets into in THUNDERBOLTS and more next year!

That's all the space we've got for this one, Venomaniacs!

Be here in thirty for #30!

Over and out,
Devin
11.10.23